

**Transportation Funding Interim Study – Revenue and Transportation Interim Committee  
(7/9/2015)**

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American Council of Engineering Companies of Montana**

The American Council of Engineering Companies of Montana (ACEC-Montana) represents engineering firms throughout the state. Our members are engaged in a wide range of engineering works that propel the Montana's economy, and enhance and safeguard our quality of life. Every day, engineering firms across Montana work with elected officials and government agencies to deliver high quality design services for public infrastructure projects.

Our members strongly support an interim study in the same vein as proposed by HJ24 last session.

MDT estimates a very substantial funding gap between Montana's transportation infrastructure needs and our currently available resources. One significant reason for this funding gap is that Montana hasn't increased its state gas tax, or -- "user fee" -- for highways, roads, and bridges since 1994.

As you know, we need to invest in our transportation infrastructure for our businesses to compete with other states. Further, the highway construction program is a tremendous source of good paying jobs, which the Montana economy so dearly needs.

In an era of "no new tax pledges" and the recent politicization of infrastructure funding we ask you to engage each other, your leadership, MDT, and the Governor's office to tackle the issue of transportation funding for the benefit of all Montanans. Adequate and safe transportation infrastructure is truly one of the things all of your constituents expect state government to provide and that benefits every one of us on a daily basis.

Thank you for the opportunity to address your committee.

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On a separate note, we also urge you to support the study entitled "Adequacy of Local Government Revenue Generating Capacity" as proposed by Sen. Barrett. Cities and counties need the ability to diversify their revenue streams rather than further burden property tax payers.